

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

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FOR: IOP/M; IPS, IBS, IAA

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SUBJ : MEDIA REACTION

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NEWS COVERAGE, COMMENT ON INDO-CHINA DWINDLED SHARPLY
EARLY IN WEEK, PICKED UP SLIGHTLY WEEK'S END OVER MAYAGUEZ
INCIDENT. STUDENT VISA PROBLEMS RECEIVING SOME ATTENTION.

1. MOST PAPER CARRIED CMR'CIAL COPY ON CAMBODIAN SEIZURE
OF U.S. SHIP. NBC LAGOS COMMENTARY WAS ALSO NOTEWORTHY.
TWO PAPERS COMMENTED:

A. MAY 16 RENAISSANCE (EAST CENTRAL STATE-60,000
CIRC.) IN EDITORIAL, "US RETURN TO CAMBODIA," SK
"THE US INVASION WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN
NOTHING MORE THAN A FALL-OUT OF NAKED CAMBODIAN
PROVOCATION--AMERICANS MARINES WERE DESPATCHED ON
A RESCUE OPERATION TO FREE A US MERCHANT SHIP AND
CREW OF 39 CAPTUREDD BY THE CAMBODIANS.

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"IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE DANGER THAT SUCH INVASION
POSES TO GLOBAL PEACE MIGHT EASILY BE LOST TO AN APATHETIC
WORLD. THE CAMBODIAN EXPERIENCE SERVES AS A LESSON--INDEED A
WARNING--TO SMALLER NATIONS NOT TO ATTEMPT PROTECTING THEIR
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AT THE RISK OF OFFENDING THE BIG POWERS.

"AMERICA HAS DEMONSTRATED NOT ONLY HER ABILITY BUT HER
PREPAREDNESS TO DO WHATEVER SHE CONSIDERS DEFENSIBLE
WITHIN THE BORDERS OF WEAKER STATES... NOT QUITE LONG AGO,
THE UNITED STATES WARNED THAT SHE MIGHT FORCIBLY SEIZE ARAB
OIL FIELDS IF THE WORLD ENERGY SUPPLY THREATENED TO STRANGLE
HER ECONOMY. WITH CAMBODIA RIGHT AT THE BASE OF OUR MIND,
THIS US THREAT BECOMES VERY REAL INDEED.

"WE HAPPEN TO KNOW THAT IF CAMBODIA WERE A CLIENT-
NATION OF THE USSR, THE WORLD MIGHT HAVE BEEN HEARING A
DIFFERENT STORY FROM PHNOM PENH.

"IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THIS NEWSPAPER APPEALS TO
THE UNITED STATES TO RECOGNISE ITS COMMITMENT TO WORLD PEACE
AND TO AVOID ANY ACTION CAPABLE OF PRECIPITATING ANOTHER
HOLOCAUST THAT WILL ENGULF MANKIND."

B. MAY 16: MID-WEST STATE'S ILLINOIS OBSERVER (CIRC. 50,000)
EDITORIAL, "AWAY WITH RECKLESS SHOW OF POWER," SAID "CAMBODIAN
SEIZURE OF THE AMERICAN SHIP MAY INDEED HAVE BEEN TOO SHARP
A MEASURE," BUT CRITICIZES AMERICA'S "TOUGH TALK (WHICH) HAS
REGRETTABLY BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY A RECKLESS AND PROVOCATIVE
SHOW OF MILITARY MIGHT...

"IT IS TYPICAL OF THE AMERICAN TEMPERAMENT THAT EVEN AS
NEGOTIATIONS WERE GOING ON THROUGH THE AGENCY OF CHINA... THE
UNITED STATES STILL FOUND IT CONCEIVABLE TO RAID CAMBODIAN
SHIPS.

"NOW THAT THE MERCHANT SHIP HAS BEEN SET FREE THE UNITED
STATES MAY PROBABLY BE TEMPTED TO OFFER DIPLOMATIC APOLOGIES.
THAT WOULD BE CLOSING THE STABLE AFTER THE HORSE HAS BOLTED
AWAY. THE HARM HAS BEEN DONE. AMERICA SHOULD LEARN TO AVOID
THE MENTALITY AND BEHAVIOUR OF THE 'UGLY AMERICAN.'
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C. NBC LAGOS DOMESTIC SERVICE "NEWSTALK", 1500 GMT, MAY 16,
BY ATILADE ATUYEBI (COVERED BY FBIS) NOTED CAMBODIANS' DESIRE
"TO END THEIR HUMILIATION OF THE UNITED STATES," SAID
THAT U.S. "WHICH BEFORE NOW AVOIDED ANY CONFRONTATION,"
STATED "SHARPLY AND DECISIVELY LIKE A WOUNDED LION THAT IT IS."
COMMENTATOR DESCRIBED KHMER ROUGE'S VIEW OF
THE SEIZURE AS

"PARTLY A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE AND PARTLY AN ASPECT OF THE GENERAL OPERATION TO CLEAN UP ALL FORMS OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE," BUT DECLARED, "ON THE OTHER HAND THERE ARE THOSE WHO FEEL THAT THE SEIZURE.. WAS NOT ONLY OUTRAGEOUSBUT ALSO PROVOCATIVE." NOTING THAT THE LOSS OF CAMBODIA AND SVC "HAS ERODED THE CONFIDENCE OF AMERICAN ALLIES IN THE ABILITY OF THE UNITED STATES TO DEFEND THEM IN THE WAKE OF ANY EXTERNAL AGGRESSION," COMMENTATOR EXPRESSED VIEW THAT "ONLY A FEW PEOPLE WOULD NOT EXPECT THE UNITED STATES TO SEIZE THIS SINGULAR OPPORTUNITY TO MEND ITS IMAGE.....IN THE UNITED STATES, PRESIDENT FORD HAS TAKEN ZANTAGE OF THE OCCASIONEASSERT PRESIDENTIAL POWERS... WEAKENED BY THE WATERGATE CRISIS." THE CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES THAT FORD AS BEEN RECEIVING INDICATE THAT "THE COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY AND THE PEOPLE IS CLOSING. THIS COULD STRENGTHEN RESIDENT FORD'S DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY PROGRAMS. IT IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT THAT OTHER BIG POWERS WERE EITHER SILENT OR MILD IN THEIR CRITICISM OF THE UNITED STATES ACTION..."

2. SEVE

AL PAPERS DURING WEEK CARRIED IPS STORY, "SOME DO'S AND DON'TS FOR AFRICAN STUDENTS."

SUNDAY SKETCH (MAY 11) CARRIED INTERVIEW WITH U.S. CONSULAR OFFICIALSNRINED "US DEPORTS 20 NIGERIANS," BUT STORY AND TIE-IN EDITORIAL ON MAY 12 SHOWED SOME UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY FOR U.S. PROBLEMS.

EDITORIAL CALLED FOR "NEED FOR EDUCATING THE PUBLIC...)(THAT) PRESENT-DAY AMERICA DOES NOT OFFER MUCH PROSPECTS FOR THE IMPECUNIOUS STRAGGLERS AND ADVENTURERS. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE A REFUGE FOR STUDENTS WITHOUT ADEQUATE MEANS OF SUPPORTING THEIR STUDIES.

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"SECONDLY, THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TREATS THOSE WHO ENTER THEIR COUNTRY WITH VISITOR'S VISAS STRICTLY AS VISITORSWN THAT ANY OPT BY VISITORS TO PROLONG THEIR STAY THROUGH BACKHAND MEANS ARE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT DOOMED TO FAILURE...

"EERY HUMAN, RESTORATIVE STEP POSSIBLE SHOULD BE TAKEN XTHE AUTHORITIES INLING HE PROBLEMS OF THE NIGERIAN DESTITUTES IN THE UNITED STATES".
NOEL

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE AS RECEIVED.

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